

ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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THE CHULLPAS OF SILLUSTANI

BY GENE M. PHILLIPS, Founder of the Society

An anonymous Portuguese traveller wrote in 1617 that Sillustani had "the most remarkable ancient monuments and buildings in the whole of Peru." (1) Quite a statement about a country that is replete with ancient stone structures. The "ancient monuments" at Sillustani are the unique chullpas, about which the Tourist Guide to Peru states: "The mysterious antiquity of these imposing monuments, the loneliness and austerity of the landscape and the brooding silence combine to create an awe-inspiring atmosphere that is well worth experiencing." (2) This was enough to arouse my interest so that our next Member Expedition to Peru included Sillustani on the itinerary.

We left Cuzco early in the morning for the eleven hour train ride to Puno. Although a distance of only 381 km (237 miles), the steep grades and high altitudes made for slow moving. Also, the train stopped at every village along the way, where the local people came to the train windows to sell us their wares, usually sheep or alpaca wool garments. Following the Vilcanota Valley, we saw herds of sheep, alpaca and llama on the small haciendas of Peru's altiplano. The snow-capped peaks of the Cordillera Oriental were always in view. We came close to the Vilcanota Massif, with its snow-caps, the highest of which is Ausangate, at 6,384 m (20,945 ft). It was a breathtaking journey, not only in the scenic beauty of the rugged terrain, but also literally when we reached La Raya at 4,313 M (14,150 ft) where we were first affected by the soroche, or mountain sickness. From La Raya it was all "down-hill", so to speak, to a "mere" 3,827 m (12,550 ft) at Puno, a port on the northwest shore of Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world.

Three steamships ply the 196 km (122 miles) long lake between Puno in Peru and the Bolivian port of Guaqui to the south. There is a road around the lake and also hydrofoil service, which we took. First by car from Puno to Juli, where we boarded the hydrofoil, then across the lake to Copacabana for a brief stop, then skimming by the Island of the Sun, where legend has it that the first Inca came out of the water. We docked at the Bolivian port of Huatajata. Just 20 km (12+ miles) from the southern edge of Lake Titicaca are the fantastic ruins of Tiahuanaco, but that is another story. We must now back-track to Puno.

From Puno we travelled northwest by car over the 28 km (17 miles) of dusty road to Lake Umayo, where the Sillustani Peninsula juts out into the small, secluded lake. Umayo's still, vivid blue waters are in sharp contrast to the grays and browns of the surrounding arid, barren landscape. We had to climb

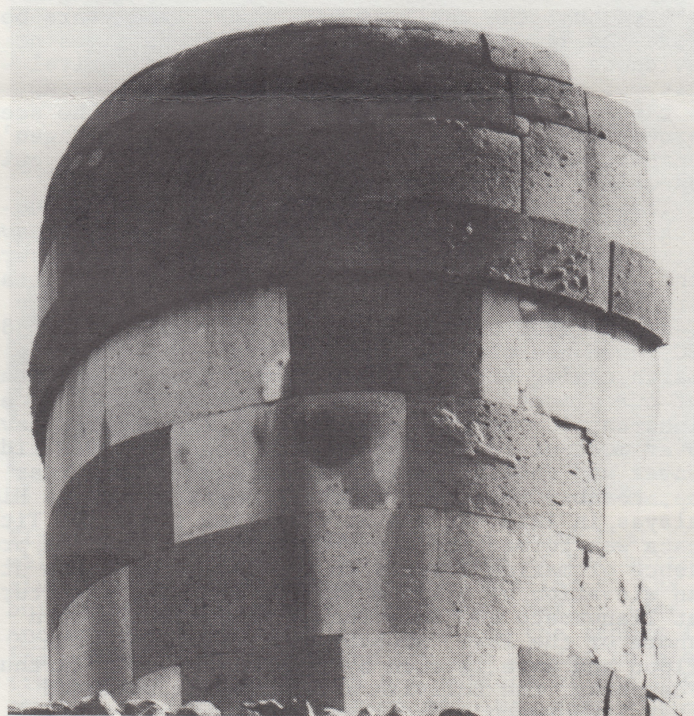


Fig. 1. One of the chullpas at Sillustani, Peru. Photo shows only the upper three-fourths of the structure. Note the exquisite stone workmanship and the figure of a lizard embossed on the stone at right center.



Fig. 2.
Right.
Close-up
of lizard.

up a steep path to reach the peninsula, where the most impressive of all the chullpas are found. There are six at Sillustani.

Sillustani is a Colla or Aymara word whose meaning has been forgotten. Chullpa means "tomb", or "funerary tower" in the Aymara language. (3) Chullpas are square, rectangular, or circular towers, built of stone, or a mixture of stone and adobe. Modern Aymaras look upon the chullpas as the dwelling places of their ancestors.

There are about 150 chullpas in the Peruvian part

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of the Collao region (the Lake Titicaca region), which extends completely around the lake, taking in part of Bolivia as well as Peru. The Collas, the inhabitants of the Collao region, are the indigenous Andean peoples, partly Aymara. The principal industries of the region are agriculture and stock farming - sheep, cattle, llama and alpaca. As to the origin of the Collas, Garcilaso, writing in 1590, related that "some say that their first ancestors came out of Lake Titicaca - others say they came from a waterfall - still others say that the ancestors came out of crevices in the boulders after the deluge. They did not know if it was the deluge of Noah, or just when it happened, but they know that it did."(4)

It is not known when the chullpas were built, but all agree that they are pre-Incaic. G. Reparaz says "it is difficult to establish a date for these monuments (chullpas) owing to the scarcity of ceramics that have been discovered."(5) Victor von Hagen states that the chullpas were built "500 years before the advent of the Inca"(6), but he gives no evidence for his conclusion. Cuzco, the capital city of the Inca Empire, was founded in 1200 AD, but the earliest Incas probably came upon the scene around 1000 AD. Thus, if we can accept von Hagen's unsubstantiated conclusion, the chullpas were built between 500 AD and 700 AD.

The chullpas were probably built "after the deluge," because it is unlikely that they could have withstood the onslaught of the winds, the pressure, the gravitational pull and the waters of the catastrophe. According to Patten and Windsor (7), the Genesis flood of Noah occurred on October 24, 2484 BC, when the planet Mars made its closest fly-by to Earth, coming within 15,000 miles (center to center) of our planet. The tremendous gravitational forces inherent in the cosmic near-collision wreaked havoc over most of the Earth, causing unprecedented tidal waves and causing entire mountain ranges to rear up, notably the Andes in South America and the Himalayas in Asia. It was at that time that Lake Titicaca was formed and the event accounts for the presence of marine fossils in the Titicaca region at an elevation of 4,115 m (13,500 ft). The structures at Tiahuanaco and Puma Punku, near the southern shore of the lake, probably existed before the flood and were leveled by the Mars fly-by. (Arthur Posnansky, the Bolivian archaeologist, believed that Tiahuanaco is at least 30,000 years old[8]). Modern archaeologists attribute Tiahuanaco to the Incas, but the Incas take no credit for it and in fact, stated that the ruins were there when they came upon the scene. Archaeological digs at Tiahuanaco show that many of the stone artifacts were found six feet below ground level, which is quite amazing at that high altitude. The conclusion is inescapable that there was total destruction at the site which was covered with water and the silt accumulated to a great depth when the waters subsided.

Therefore, if the immense stone structures at Tiahuanaco were toppled like a house of cards by the global disaster, then certainly, if the chullpas had been then standing, all we would see today would be a pile of stones. Instead, we see at Sillustani circular towers, constructed entirely of stone, about 4 m (12 ft) in diameter at the base and some about 7 1/2 m (25 ft) high. Constructed of ashlar masonry without mortar, the outer curved surfaces of the stone walls have been hewn and dressed to a high degree of smoothness. Utilizing a unique "boss and socket" arrangement of interlocking stones, each stone has a concave cavity hewn into one end and a boss, or protuberance, fashioned at the other end, so that the stones fit together so tightly that they have withstood the ravages of time, earthquakes and the elements for the last 15 centuries, but not the action of man. See Figs. 3 & 4.

Another unique feature of the Sillustani chullpas

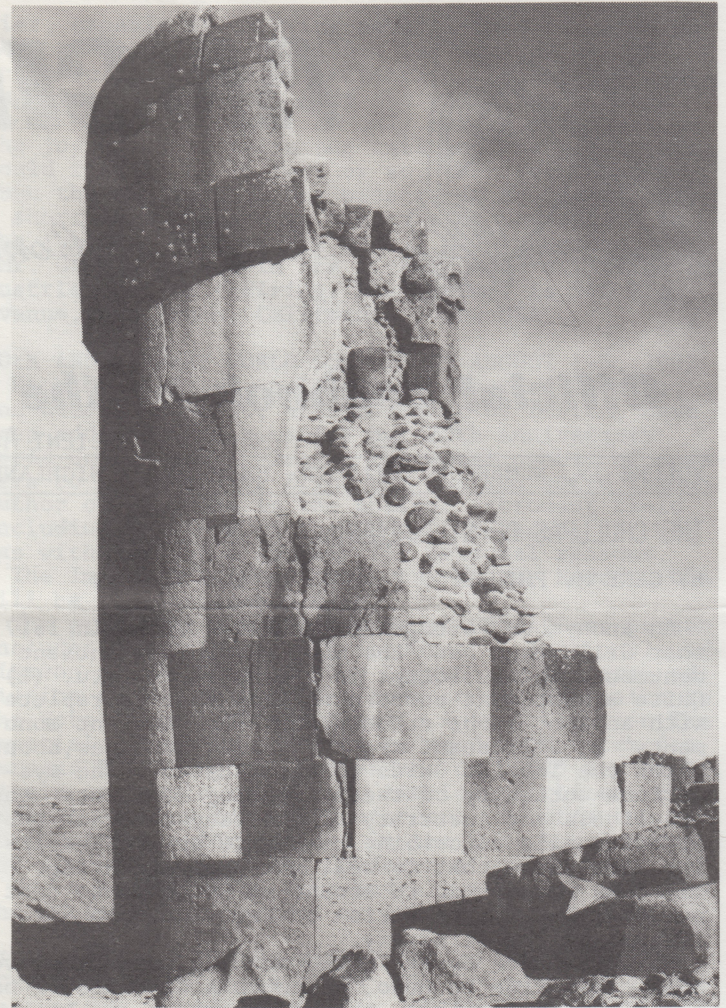
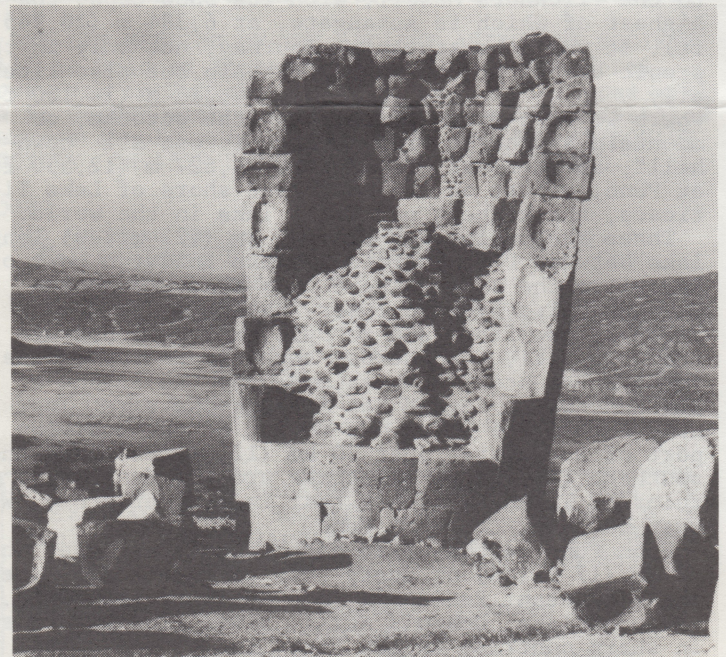


Fig. 3 above and Fig. 4 below show side and back views of chullpa shown in Fig. 1. Legend has it that the Spanish conquistadors, in search of gold, used blasting powder to break open the structure. Note the concave cavities carved into some stones to form a "socket" into which the "bosses" of other stones fit to prevent movement.



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is that the circumference of the top course of stones is greater than that of the ground level course. Thus the walls are not perpendicular to the ground, not exactly vertical, but rather form an acute angle of less than 90 degrees in relation to the ground. Also, the top course of stones is flared inward to give a rounded effect at the top. It is obvious that the chullpas of Sillustani were not thrown together as a cairn of rocks, but rather their construction required architectural design, engineering skills, mechanics, and a means of fabricating the stones to precise tolerances to produce an aesthetic, solid, functional structure.

Writing about the chullpas of Sillustani, Hammond Innes states: "This is workmanship of an even higher order than anything in Cuzco, and it was done without the aid of metal, the stone being beaten into shape by primitive hammer tools of a harder stone." (9) This is incredible! The only truth in his statement is that the workmanship is of a "higher order." Everything else is pure fantasy. How does Innes know the builders had no metal tools? Just 150 miles to the south, huge smoothly dressed stones which are the remnants of the colossal works at Puma Punku contain slots carved into them which enable the slabs to be connected and reinforced with metal straps! These metal straps are in a museum in La Paz, Bolivia. So it is not only possible, but highly probable that the builders of the chullpas possessed metal tools.

And, who ever heard of stone being "beaten into shape"? And by primitive stone tools, no less! No, Mr. Innes was carried away by the "scientific fiction" we are taught to believe which holds that the natives of Central and South America possessed no sophisticated tools or technology and accomplished all their amazing results with the use of primitive stone hand tools.

The finished product itself, the chullpas, should be sufficient evidence to prove that the builders did possess the technology, methods and tools necessary to produce such a result. Or, we are forced to conclude that the builders were not the Collas at all, but an older civilization which had reached a high degree of technological advancement, only to be lost in pre-history. It is the height of arrogance for our scientists to marvel at the accomplishments of ancient people, but at the same time wonder how they could have produced such works with none of the technology which we possess today. The answer is simple - they did have it.

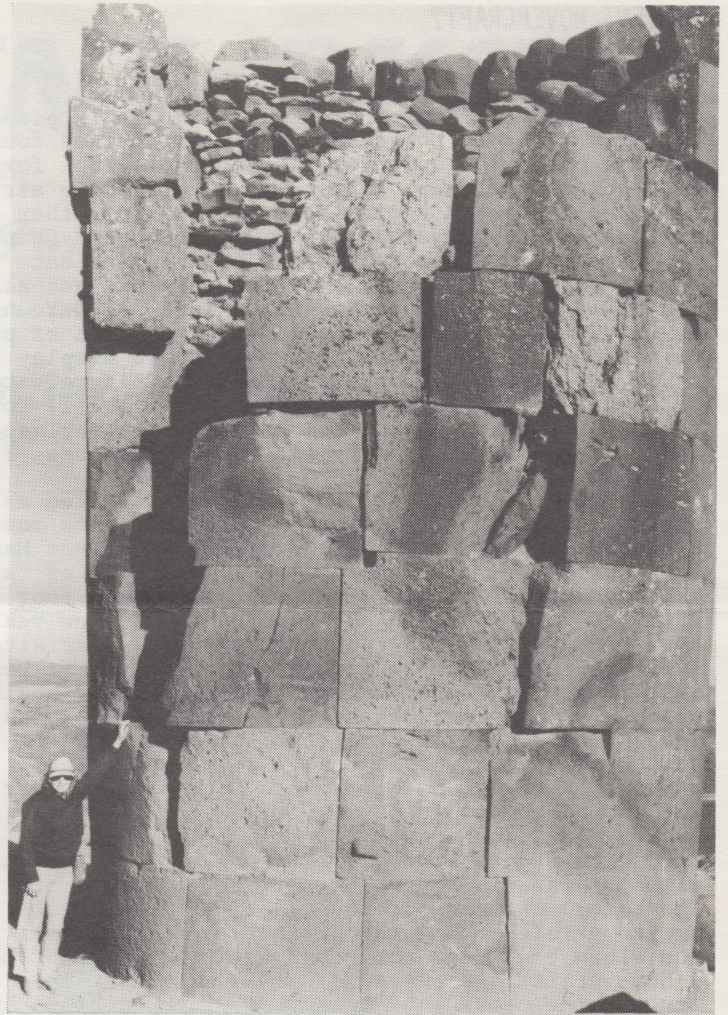


Fig. 6. Another Sillustani chullpa. Note that the walls of the structure slant inward at the bottom giving a "top-heavy" appearance, similar to the buildings at Tulum in Quintana Roo, Mexico (see Ancient Skies 19:1). Also, note how the stones in the second course from the top are placed to protrude a few inches beyond the surface of the outer wall to form a decorative molding, also similar to the Tulum structures.

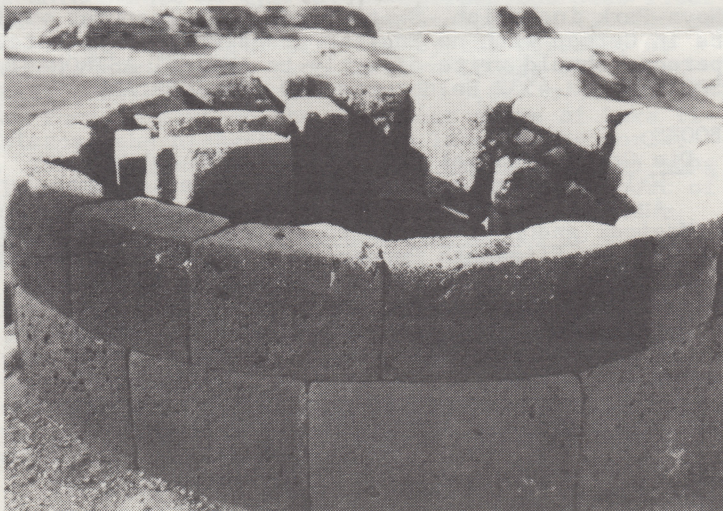


Fig. 5. Base of unfinished chullpa.

All photographs used in this article were taken by the author.

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- (9) The Conquistadors, Hammond Innes, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1969, p. 248.

ANCIENT HOVERCRAFT?

BY VAUGHN M. GREENE*

One possible proof of high civilization in pre-historic times is the airplane-like figurines found in some primitive cultures. Indeed the symbol for the Ancient Astronaut Society is a delta-wing aircraft gold object from the pre-Inca world. Other similar objects have been found in Egypt and China.

I recently was dumbfounded to find an ancient sculpture which not only shows an aircraft but also the pilot flying it! In November, 1992 the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco opened a new exhibit of pre-Columbian art. Among the many objects on display is a "flute" from the Vera Cruz (Mexico) Culture, dated to about 200 AD. It is difficult (and illegal) to take a photograph of the object, as it is enclosed in a glass case in a dimly lit room. Therefore, I would like to describe it.

The object, about one foot long, is labelled as a "flute"; however, I believe it is an accurate model of an aircraft known as a G.E.M. (Ground Effect Machine), or hovercraft. It would have consisted of twin aluminum booms, about 20 feet long, and one foot in diameter. The two booms are held in a shallow Vee by a platform on the front on which the pilot sits. Actually, he sits on a saddle, which has a backrest reaching to his waist. Around his middle is a belt, which I believe acts as a seat strap. In his front is a "loin cloth" which I feel is actually an instrument panel. On the front of the craft is a shield with a human face on it, which would cover the engine. There is nothing radical about this. Such a craft could be built today.

On each side of the booms are half circle wings, with a large diameter hole in the middle of each. The holes, used on some types of ducted aircraft, are to enable air to be sucked in by propellers and blown downward. Proof that this does indeed show a hovercraft is a tasseled fringe about 6 inches long on the outside of the wings. The principle by which a hovercraft works is that air is blown into a confined space and the craft is then lifted off the ground by air pressure. Nearly all hovercraft use a fringe, or skirt, around the space to allow excess air to escape, and to maneuver the craft by lifting sections of the skirt, left or right, backward or forward. There are air intake nozzles on the front of the booms and exhaust ducts on the ends which may indicate they are jet engines.

What is unique and unusual on the craft is a "scorpion tail" which curls up in back of the pilot's seat. The 10 foot tail, I believe, is just that. By lifting up it creates drag to slow the craft down. If bent left or right, it would turn the craft. Usually G.E.M.s lift only about 6 inches off the ground, or water. However, the Russians and the Fokker Aircraft Co. of Germany have both built G.E.M.s which can, by use of a tail, be flown up to 100 feet altitude. I believe this Vera Cruz device is just such a craft.

Another unusual feature of the object is that the pilot is wearing a long, narrow helmet, shaped like a dragon head. However, inside the round "dragon eye" can be seen a human eye. The figure also seems to be wearing shoulder pads. In studying history, I have come to the conclusion that the ancients had at least 6 different types of aircraft. Very often they would shape the aircraft, and their flying suits, to look like "dragons" to scare away the superstitious natives. What were the hovercraft for?

It is known from radar imaging satellite photos that the entire Yucatan Peninsula once had an extensive system of canals, now filled in. I believe the hovercraft were used to fly as fast as 200 miles per hour through the jungles, skimming just above the surface of the water-filled canals. Much better than using muddy roads. Judging from the Vee shape of the Museum piece, I believe it was a cargo car-

rier, capable of carrying several tons of cargo on the booms, behind the pilot. The "dragon helmet" and shoulder pads were protection against low hanging vines and branches. If the pilot saw a large rock, or rapids ahead, he only had to pull back on the joy stick to raise the tail and the hovercraft would rise up to 10 feet or so, then settle back when the obstruction was passed. It should be only a short while before we start using hovercraft in the jungles, just as was done 2,000 years ago.

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20th ANNIVERSARY WORLD CONFERENCE-AUGUST 1-5, 1993

Richard T. Crowe, celtic researcher of Chicago, and Rudolf Eckhardt, archaeologist of Berlin, have been added as speakers for our 20th Anniversary World Conference, bringing the total number of speakers to 20, including Erich von Daniken, world famous author of 20 books in the ancient astronaut field, including Chariots of the Gods? Zecharia Sitchin has withdrawn as a speaker for personal reasons.

The Imperial Palace Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA will be the Conference site.

The price for the Conference of US\$150 per person includes admission to all lectures (5 sessions), admission to the Hotel's Show Legends in Concert, admission to the Gala Buffet Banquet and admission to the Hotel's Antique and Classic Auto Collection. The Imperial Palace is offering reduced room rates for persons attending the Conference of US\$45 per night, single or double, plus tax. American Airlines, the Official Airline for the Conference, is offering reduced airfares for persons in the U.S. and Canada who fly to and from the Conference on American.

For a Registration Form and all details, write to the Society Headquarters or call (708) 295-8899.

FINAL CALL FOR MEMBER EXPEDITION TO GUATEMALA AND HONDURAS, May 6 to 19, 1993. The price is US\$1,964 per person, double occupancy, which includes all hotels (13 nights), all ground transportation, one-half of the meals, admission to all sites and internal air fares. International air fare is extra. Members may join the tour in Chicago, Miami or Guatemala City. Three major sites, Tikal, Quirigua and Copan, will be visited plus many other fascinating places, with a two day rest on Roatan Island in the Caribbean Sea at the end of the tour. Don't miss this exciting adventure. Write today for details.

A ONE-DAY MEETING OF THE ANCIENT ASTRONAUT SOCIETY will be held on September 11, 1993 at the Hotel Nova-Park in Zurich, Switzerland. All lectures will be in German with no English translation. Interested persons should write directly to ANCIENT ASTRONAUT SOCIETY, CH-4532 Feldbrunnen/SO, SWITZERLAND.

BOOKS:

Die Grossen Ratsel der Letzten 2500 Jahre, by Walter-Joerg Langbein, Weltbild Verlag GmbH, Augsburg, Germany, 1992 (in German).

Magical and Mystical Sites: Europe and the British Isles, Elizabeth Pepper and John Wilcock, Phanes Press, 1993. Available from Atrium Publishers Group, P.O. Box 108, Lower Lake, CA 95457 USA.
Megalithic Adventures, Donald L. Cyr, Stonehenge Viewpoint, 800 Palermo Dr., Santa Barbara, CA 93105, 1992.

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